

In the Claims:

Claims 1 to 6 (Canceled).

1 7. (Original) In a vacuum cleaner including a housing, a
2 primary dirt collector arranged in said housing, a suction
3 motor unit arranged in said housing, an inlet suction
4 channel communicating through said primary dirt collector
5 to an inlet of said suction motor unit, and an exhaust
6 outlet passage communicating from an outlet of said suction
7 motor unit out of said housing to an environment outside of
8 said vacuum cleaner,

9 an improvement comprising an exhaust filter
10 arrangement that is interposed in said exhaust outlet
11 passage and that comprises a tubular exhaust filter
12 material arranged to completely or partially envelop at
13 least a first portion of said housing, wherein an annular
14 exhaust air space is formed as a portion of said exhaust
15 outlet passage between said first portion of said housing
16 and said tubular exhaust filter material.

1 8. (Original) The improvement in the vacuum cleaner according
2 to claim 7, wherein said primary dirt collector is a
3 primary filter bag.

1 9. (Original) The improvement in the vacuum cleaner according
2 to claim 7, further comprising a motor protective filter

interposed between said primary dirt collector and said suction motor unit.

10. (Original) The improvement in the vacuum cleaner according to claim 7, further comprising first and second securing elements that respectively removably secure and seal opposite axial ends of said tubular exhaust filter material onto said housing, and wherein said housing further includes a motor housing portion in which said suction motor unit is arranged, and said exhaust outlet passage further includes a motor chamber enclosed in said motor housing portion and plural through-flow openings passing from said motor chamber to said annular exhaust air space.

11. (Original) The improvement in the vacuum cleaner according to claim 7, wherein said exhaust filter material has a micron particle size filtering quality.

12. (Original) The improvement in the vacuum cleaner according to claim 7, wherein said exhaust filter arrangement further comprises an elastic filter support body that supports the exhaust filter material which is externally arranged.

13. (Original) The improvement in the vacuum cleaner according to claim 7, wherein said exhaust filter material is externally arranged and comprises and is formed by an air-permeable elastic self-supporting body.

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1 14. (Original) A vacuum cleaner comprising:

2 a housing including a main housing portion and two end
3 housing portions respectively arranged at opposite ends of
4 said main housing portion;

5 a primary dirt collector arranged inside said main
6 housing portion;

7 a suction motor unit that is arranged in said housing,
8 and that has a motor unit inlet and a motor unit outlet;

9 an inlet suction channel communicating through said
10 primary dirt collector to said motor unit inlet;

11 an exhaust filter arrangement arranged outwardly
12 relative to and externally covering at least a part of said
13 main housing portion while forming an annular exhaust air
14 space between said main housing portion and said exhaust
15 filter arrangement, wherein said annular exhaust air space
16 communicates outwardly through said exhaust filter
17 arrangement to an environment outside of said vacuum
18 cleaner; and

19 an exhaust outlet passage communicating from said
20 motor unit outlet to said annular exhaust air space.

1 15. (Original) The vacuum cleaner according to claim 14,
2 wherein said primary dirt collector, said main housing
3 portion, and said exhaust filter arrangement are all
4 arranged coaxially relative to each other about a common
5 central axis.

1 16. (Original) The vacuum cleaner according to claim 15,
2 wherein said main housing portion and said exhaust filter
3 arrangement each respectively have a hollow cylindrical
4 shape, and said exhaust filter arrangement extends entirely
5 around a circumference of said main housing portion.

1 17. (Original) The vacuum cleaner according to claim 14,
2 wherein said main housing portion and said exhaust filter
3 arrangement each respectively have a hollow cylindrical
4 shape, and said exhaust filter arrangement extends entirely
5 around a circumference of said main housing portion.

1 18. (Original) The vacuum cleaner according to claim 14,
2 wherein said exhaust filter arrangement has a shape of a
3 circular arc segment of an annular partial-cylindrical
4 shell, and extends around a part of an outer
5 circumferential perimeter of said main housing portion.

1 19. (Original) The vacuum cleaner according to claim 14,
2 wherein said exhaust filter arrangement has a tubular shape
3 and extends around an entire outer circumferential
4 perimeter of said main housing portion.

1 20. (Original) The vacuum cleaner according to claim 14,
2 wherein said exhaust filter arrangement is externally
3 exposed and externally visible outside of said housing.